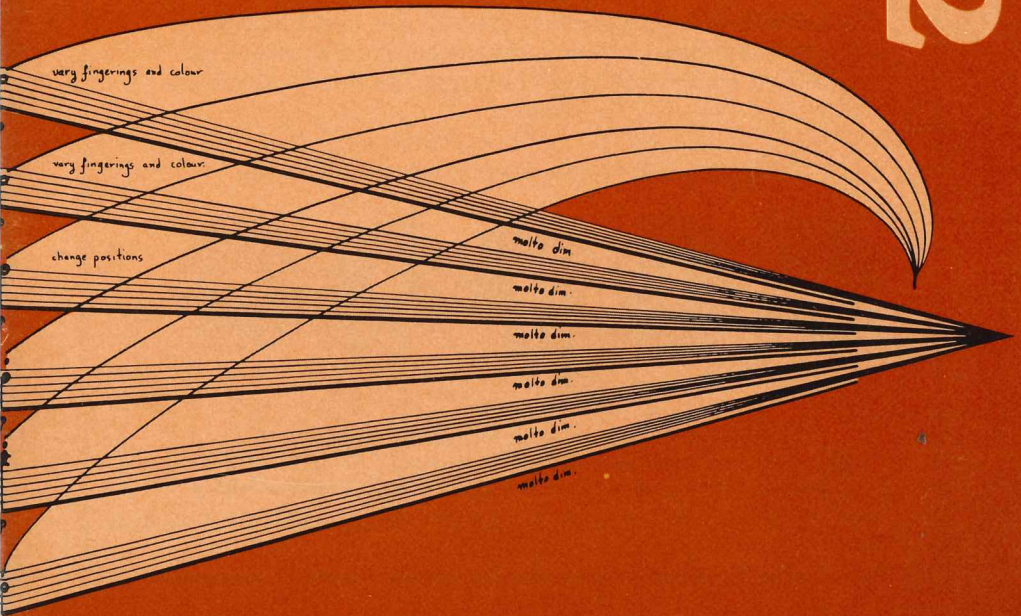


NOV 27 1981

NEW MUSIC CONCERTS 1981-82



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New Music Concerts

artistic director
ROBERT AITKEN

presents

IANNIS XENAKIS

NOVEMBER 27, 1981

9:00 p. m.

YORK UNIVERSITY, FINE ARTS BLDG., STUDIO I

P R O G R A M

BOHOR (1962)

IANNIS XENAKIS

LEGEND OF ER (1977)

IANNIS XENAKIS

This program was presented with
the co-operation of Alan Lessem and
the Faculty of Music, York University.

New Music Concerts would like to thank
Ron Lynch and Octopus Audio for their
assistance in tonights program.

IANNIS XENAKIS

Iannis Xenakis was born in Braila, Roumania in 1922 of Greek parents. He received his basic education in Greece where he lived until 1947. Due to political pressures, he was forced at this point to flee Greece, and en route to the U.S.A., he stopped in Paris, where he has resided ever since.

Engineer, architect, mathematician, political activist but foremost, musician, Xenakis has distinguished himself as perhaps the foremost exponent of the use of modern technology in humanistic endeavour. With few exceptions - most notably the architect Le Corbusier (with whom Xenakis collaborated for thirteen years) - such attempts have suffered from naivete on either the artistic or technical side, or both; for as Xenakis states, it is sufficiently difficult to maintain competence in one field, much less two or more. It is the recognition of this fact which is largely responsible for the success of his efforts. Xenakis has a basic competence in both science and music having studied engineering in Athens, and music with such notable composers as Honegger, Milhaud and Messiaen. Furthermore, he is a musician, who recognized quite early the value of active collaboration between artist and technologist. His collaboration with scientists has manifested itself in the formation of various groups dedicated to research into science and music, most recently, the Centre for Mathematical and Automated Music, in Paris; however, what is of most interest is his notion of music which makes such union even desirable.

The notion of music, as conceived by Xenakis, evolved during the period dominated by the strict rules of serial technique. His hypothesis was that the polyphony of serial music was perceptually non-existent, strangled as it was by its own complexity. Rather, he proposed that such complex structures were perceived as sonic 'masses' or conglomerates, and in composition should be conceived as such. But the conceiving of music as mass brings forth the suggestion of music as three-dimensional: groups of sounds as clouds, whose size, shape, density, color, weight, speed, etc., and all transitions therein, become the source materials in the process of musical 'design'. that is, composition.

If one acknowledges the value of conceptualizing music in these terms, as did Xenakis, then it becomes not only desirable, but necessary to evolve a descriptive language for music which reflects this notion. Herein lies the chief role of mathematics and logic in the music of Xenakis: to derive a formalization which reflects how he believes music is perceived. While the nature of the calculus which he employs is extremely complex, as we see, the motivation is not, and the musicality of the results are clear to all.

BOHOR (1962)

Bohor is the last of the five electronic works composed by Iannis Xenakis at the studio of the Group de Recherches Musicales at the French Radio in Paris. It is dedicated to Pierre Schaeffer.

According to the composer, Bohor is "a monistic music of internal plurality, converging, shrinking in the acute angle of the end."

The space projection of the eight magnetic tracks is exploited here not for the kinematics that the projection makes perceptible but towards the aim of enriching the sound of quality. The refinement of perception which results unveils, through a sort of accumulating of information, the infinitely varied diversity of the micro-structures.

It is deliberate that the composer has given no descriptive information regarding his work, leaving the listener to find for himself a path in it.

GESTE OF LIGHT AND SOUND

THE LEGEND OF ER (1977)

Program notes by IANNIS XENAKIS

Music is not a language. Any musical piece is like a rock of complex formation with striae and patterns engraved on it and inside, which man may decipher in a thousand ways without one single one being the best or the most true. In accordance with this multiple exegesis, music gives rise to all sorts of phantasmagoriae, like a crystal catalyst. Myself, I wanted to deal with the abysses that surrounds us and among which we live. The most formidable are those of our destiny, of life and death, of the visible and invisible universes. The signals that these abysses send us are also of lights and sounds which excite the two principal senses that we possess. This is why the DIATOPE would like to be a site of condensation of these worlds' signals. Rational knowledge is amalgamated with intuitive knowledge, that is, revelation. It is impossible to disjoint them. These abysses are unknowable, that is, their knowledge is in perpetual and desperate escape made of landmark-hypotheses through the ages. It is difficult and probably not necessary to attempt to explain the spectacle and the music on all their levels.

THE DIATOPE & LEGEND OF ER

"... Imagine in a distant future that the power of the artist's action be augmented as never before in history (in fact this is the path followed by mankind in its creation and dissipation of ever-increasing quantities of energy). Indeed there is no reason why art cannot escape, as science has done, into the cosmic immensity, and why it cannot be able to modify, like a cosmic landscape artist, the shape of the galaxies."

IANNIS XENAKIS

The Legend of Er" is the musical part of the Diatope.

Diatope: Automated sound and visual composition, conceived, designed, and realized by Iannis Xenakis.

The Diatope is the latest phase in the specific research work that Iannis Xenakis has carried on since 1958 in the creative merging of music, visual arts, sciences, and architecture, a research work founded on the original idea of the amalgamation of science and art including their modern developments -- mathematics, physics, cybernetics, computer science, abstract painting, new architectural visions, music-- in the attempt to unveil and change the usual mental framework and also to create a more general aesthetics, that is an original artistic synthesis which reconciles rational knowledge and revolution.

The Diatope is not concert, nor opera, nor ballet, nor improvisation, but rather proposes a geste of lights and sounds and foreshadows a new sort of total, automated, multimedia event, abstract and concrete at the same

time, such as are the movements of the stars and galaxies. It is an interdisciplinary composition in architecture, music, light, mathematics, computer science, and technology, where each discipline is treated independently as an entity in itself and, at the same time, as an element in the synthesis with all the mutual influences among the disciplines that come into play.

The Music - Legend of Er

The music for the "Legend of Er" (with reference to the Republic of Plato) is on 7-track 1" tape and is made of the following families of sounds: instrumental, for example the sonorous shooting stars at the beginning and at the end, the sound of African guimbards, Japanese tsouzoumis,...; noises, for example special bricks hit together, rubbing on cardboard,...; sounds generated by mathematical functions, first in numerical form by computer then converted into sound by the digital/analog converter at the Centre d'Etudes de Mathématique et Automatique Musicales (CEMAMu).

Here, Xenakis has inaugurated a new approach in sound generation, different and even in the opposite direction from the methods of electronic music studios in laboratories using computers and digital-to-analog conversion. It is no longer a question of starting from calculus and the Fourier analysis, which makes it possible to construct sound by the intermediary of stacking harmonic or partial sinusoidal sounds. This new method constructs and acts directly on the pressure-time-curve which, itself, arrives at the ear. Xenakis employs probability functions to generate pressure-time curves, thereby working directly at the $1/40,000$ of a second.

The one thing remaining from the traditional approach is the notion of a periodicity, but considered in a broad sense, that is to say the stochastic renewal of equivalence classes of pressure and duration values. The functions used here are, essentially, those of Cauchy and the famous "logistic", as well as functions of these functions. This is thus a controlled modelling of Brownian movements (random walk).

These families of sounds; several of which were realized at the Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR) in Cologne, were then treated with filters, reverberations, speed transpositions, and varied mixings at the electronic music studio of the WDR, which, moreover, had commissioned this music and financed all the studio work.

DON'T FORGET TOMORROW NIGHTS CONCERT
at the Edward Johnson Building 8:30 p.m.
For tickets and information call:
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P R O G R A M

VALSE (1981)

YVES DAOUST

Anthony Antonacci, flute
James Campbell, clarinet
David Tanner, saxophone
Donald Englert, saxophone
James Spragg, trumpet
Paul Meyer, violin
Marc Widner, electric piano & organ
Elizabeth Keenan, harpsichord
Kathleen Solose, piano

THERAPS (1976)

IANNIS XENAKIS

Joel Quarrington, double bass

I N T E R M I S S I O N

PLEIADES (1979)

IANNIS XENAKIS

- I. Melanges (Blends)
- II. Claviers (Keyboards)
- III. Metaux (Sixxen)
- IV. Peaux (Skins)

PERCUSSIONISTS

Robert Becker
John Brownell
David Campion
Robin Engelman
Russell Hartenberger
Beverley Johnston

"Music, to create harmony, must investigate discord."



No, that isn't a remark of Charles Ives or of John Weinzweig, but of Plutarch. His words were true at the time of the Roman Empire and they remain valid in our day too. Canadian composers have created and will continue to create music which investigates all of the artistic possibilities of sound. Come to the Canadian Music Centre and investigate the investigators.

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